

# THE CONVENTION THAT NOMINATED LINCOLN

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON MAY  
18, 1916, THE FIFTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF LINCOLN'S NOMINATION FOR THE  
PRESIDENCY

By P. ORMAN RAY, PH. D.  
PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY



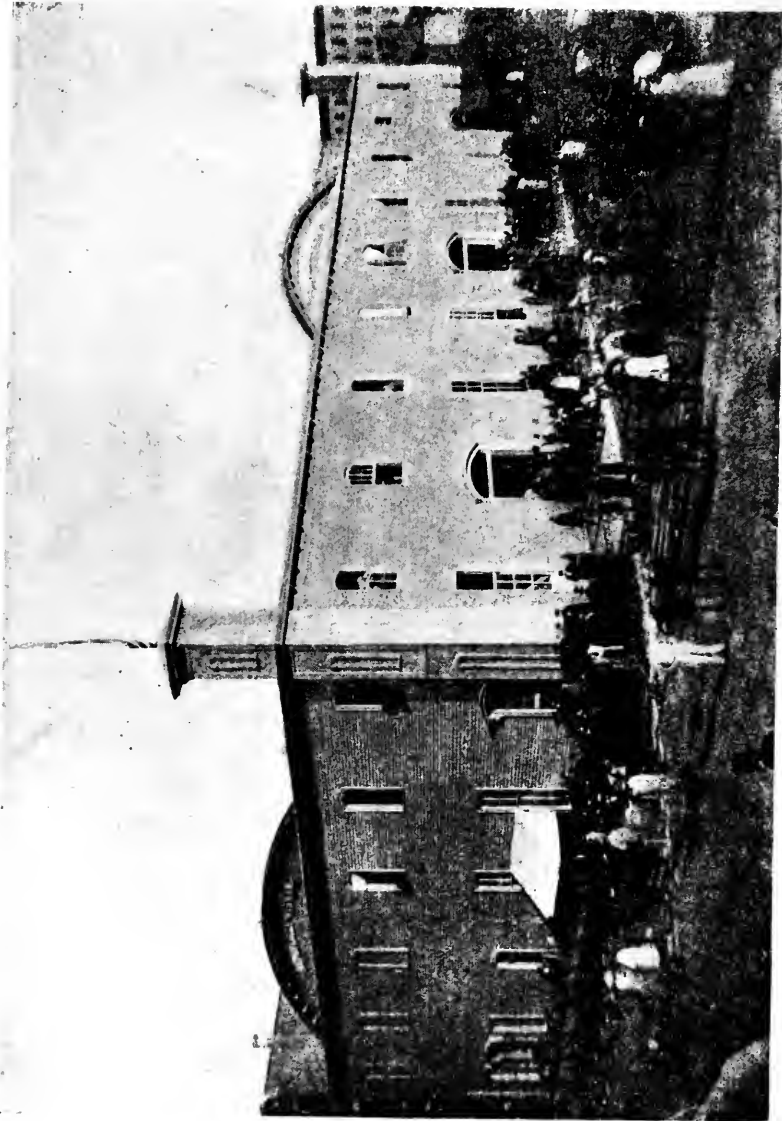
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REPUBLICAN "WIGWAM"  
Southeast Corner Lake and Market Streets  
(Photographed by Hessler during convention, May, 1860)

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## INTRODUCTION

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Our national nominating conventions are unique: nothing of the kind exists in any other country. As great national spectacles they attract people from all sections of the country and even from Europe.

In the history of the Republican party, three national conventions stand pre-eminent; that of 1860, which gave to the country Abraham Lincoln; that of 1880, in which was fought the great battle over the attempt to nominate General Grant for a third term; and that of 1912, the sad story of which is all too familiar to some of us. Each of these outstanding conventions was held in the City of Chicago, and that of 1860 was the first national nominating convention ever held in that city. The selection of Chicago as the convention city was itself significant of the important part which the young Northwest had come to play in national politics and has continued to play ever since.

In preparing this lecture, I have tried largely to forget what is contained in the accounts of this convention appearing in the standard histories, and have tried to present a story of the convention based almost wholly upon the official record and upon material gleaned from the Chicago newspapers, which so far as I am aware have not been used by the authors of the histories just mentioned. I shall try to relate the story of the convention so far as practicable in the language of contemporary eyewitnesses. Conse-

quently I disclaim all responsibility for striking superlatives, glowing metaphors, incandescent adjectives and superheated imaginative passages written in the midst of convention excitement. The lecture makes no claim to being a contribution to knowledge, but is more nearly what my colleague of the English Department might call "a study in local color."

To the officials of The Newberry Library and the Chicago Historical Society I wish to express my gratitude for courteously placing at my service the newspaper files in their respective libraries.

P. ORMAN RAY.

Evanston,  
22 May, 1916.

## THE CONVENTION THAT NOMINATED LINCOLN

The Republican National Convention of 1860 not only has the distinction of being the first convention to have had telegraphic instruments brought into the convention building for the use of newspaper correspondents, but it has the additional distinction of being the first national convention to meet in a building specially erected for its use, the famous Chicago Wigwam. To us the Wigwam would seem much like a doll-house in comparison with the present Coliseum; but to the hundreds of delegates and thousands of spectators who thronged it between the 12th and 18th of May, 1860, it was indeed a marvel. It was a "substantial wooden structure," two stories high, located at the southeast corner of Lake and Market streets, with a frontage of 180 feet on Market, and one hundred feet on Lake street. "This gigantic structure, the largest audience room in the United States" in 1860 was thus considerably smaller than the indoor athletic field in the Patten gymnasium at Northwestern University, or about the size of the Coliseum Annex, I am informed.

The Wigwam owed its erection to "the spirit of liberality and welcome" with which Chicago Republicans prepared to receive the first national nominating convention to come to their city. The work of construction was begun early in April, but, although rapidly pushed, the structure was barely ready for the use of the convention when it assembled May 16th. The entire cost of this unprecedentedly large building was the modest sum of between \$5000 and \$6000.

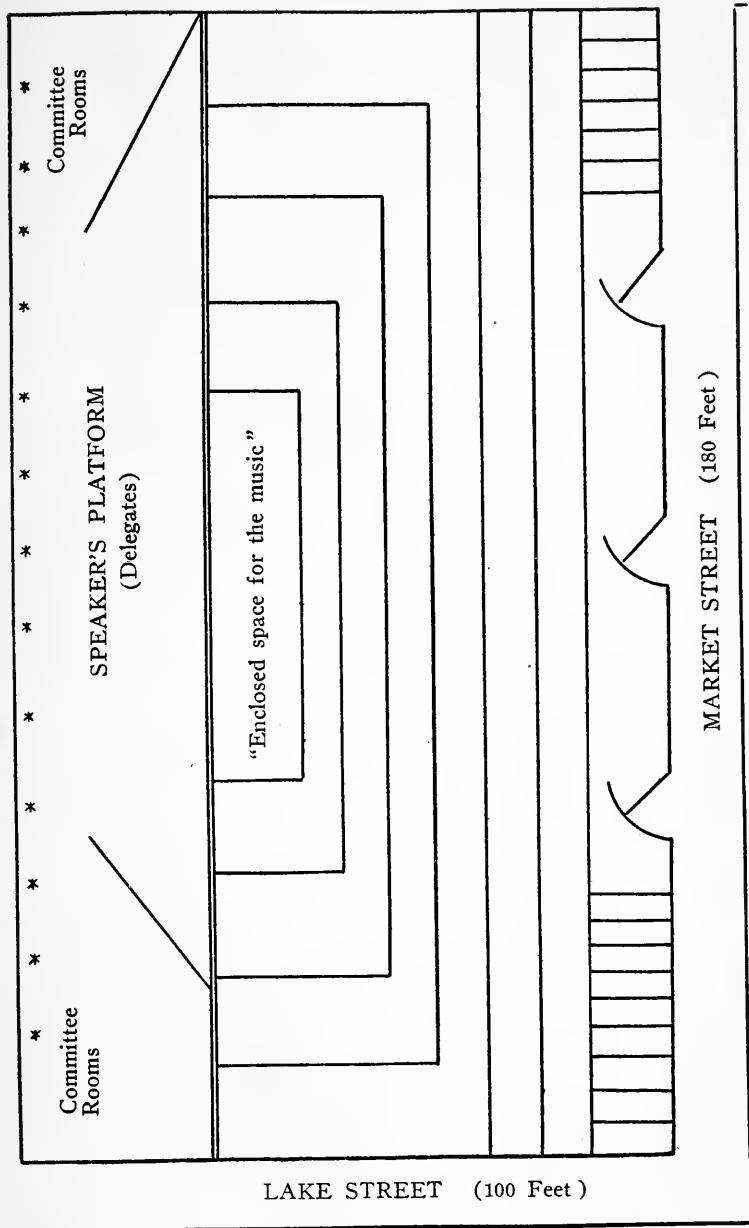
The interior arrangement of the Wigwam was quite unlike our modern convention halls. I have tried to reproduce, with slight additions, the only contemporary plan of the interior that I have ever seen.<sup>1</sup> This plan and the facts in the description which follow are taken from contemporary Chicago newspapers. In planning the building, advantage was taken of the height of the grade on both Market and Lake streets, about ten feet at that time, to facilitate the construction of a series of wide platforms or landings descending from the three entrances on Market street to the enclosed space for musicians in front of the stage. Upon this series of landings the spectators *stood* throughout the different sessions, for no seats were provided for the *hoi polloi*.

From these landings a good view was had of the deep platform or stage extending the entire width of the building. At each end of the stage were ample committee rooms. Four hundred and sixty-odd delegates and something like sixty newspaper correspondents were seated upon this stage; and here it was that the real drama of the convention was enacted. The location of each state delegation was indicated, as at the present time, by standards bearing placards with the names of the several states printed thereon.

Running around three sides of the building was a gallery, so pitched that "from every part a perfect view" of the speaker's stand could be had. This gallery seating from ten to twelve hundred persons, was reserved for ladies and the gentlemen who accompanied them, and probably was provided with seats; for an advertisement had appeared in the *Tribune* of May 8th requesting all persons who had suitable seats to contribute them for use in this gallery on this occasion. The total capacity of the building was variously estimated by contemporaries at from six to fifteen thousand.

<sup>1</sup>This sketch appeared in the *Press and Tribune* for May 14, 1860.

Brick wall of adjoining store



INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT OF THE WIGWAM

From a plan, with slight additions, appearing in the *Press and Tribune*,  
May 14, 1860



The interior was left rough and unplanned, and the wall back of the platform was the brick wall of the adjoining store. But this rough interior, we are told, was transformed by "the light, graceful and entirely successful handiwork" of the Republican ladies of Chicago. Their assistance had been invoked by such formal invitations as the following which appeared in the newspapers as the Wigwam approached completion:

*"To the Republican Ladies of Chicago:* The Building Committee of the 'Republican Wigwam,' in connection with a committee of the Young Men's Republican Club, being desirous of appropriately decorating the building now nearly completed, would respectfully ask any ladies who may be interested in the cause, and who are willing to contribute their taste and labor in such decoration, to meet the above committee at the Wigwam \* \* \* \* on Friday afternoon at three p. m. Any persons who may be willing to loan us decorations are requested to communicate, or meet with us at the above time.

Peter Page, Chairman Building Committee,  
E. S. Williams, Chairman Committee Young Men's  
Republican Club."

Other invitations, like the following, were much less formal: "The Republican girls of the city are invited to meet tomorrow at the Wigwam at three p. m. to assist in decorating it for the Convention."

Still another and later notice urged the ladies to come "armed and equipped with those formidable weapons, needles, thimbles, scissors, etc., etc.," and added that "several young men can be employed putting up decorations, if they will apply at the same time and place," bringing "tacks and hammers."

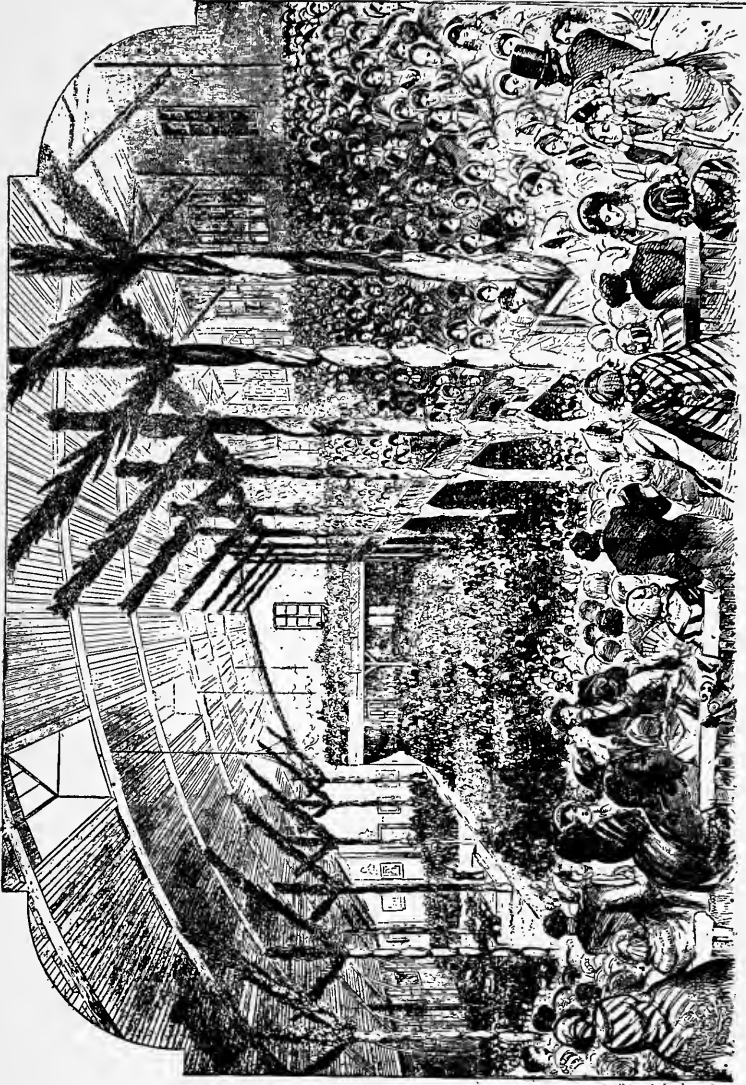
A goodly number must have responded to these appeals, for the editor of the *Daily Journal* visiting the Wigwam two days before the dedication, found "a bevy of ladies as busy as ants, decorating, sewing, and arranging wreaths

and festoons." These, with the assistance of male volunteers and painters, succeeded in relieving or concealing the bareness of the rough-finished interior. Around the front of the gallery, for example, were placed coats of arms of the several states, and between them wreaths of evergreen. The gallery pillars and supports were painted white and wreathed with evergreens, and from each to each were twined draperies in red, white and blue, with artificial flowers and miniature national flags.

The chief decoration was naturally bestowed upon the stage. The brick wall at the rear was painted and divided into arched panels in which were colossal statuary paintings of Liberty, Plenty, Justice, etc. The pillars supporting the roof and forming a continuous row along the brick wall, were twined with evergreens and connected with red, white and blue streamers, looped in the middle with evergreens and flowers. On the side of these pillars toward the audience, busts of distinguished men were supported by figures of Atlas. At the west end of the stage hung "the elegant and costly standard of the Young Men's Republican Club of New York. It bore its blazoned stars and legend all complete, save for two blanks following the lines, 'For President . . . . . For Vice-President . . . . .'" These blanks," said the *Tribune*, "were eloquent with a purpose, the purpose of the entire convention, all ready for the campaign but *waiting for the names.*" "When, for the first time the effect of gas light was added," to these decorations on the evening of the dedication, "the effect was brilliant in the extreme;" and "everybody, citizens and strangers, delegates and outsiders, . . . all fell in love with the Great Wigwam . . . and its praises were on more than half a score thousand tongues."

But apparently the impression created by the Wigwam upon those attending the convention was not conveyed to





THE REPUBLICANS IN NOMINATING CONVENTION, IN THEIR  
WIGWAM AT CHICAGO, MAY, 1860.  
(Harper's Weekly)



non-attendants by the pictures of the structure which appeared in some of the Eastern newspapers. The local pride of the editor of the *Journal* seems to have been especially offended by the illustration which appeared in *Harper's Weekly*. Under the caption, "A Disgrace," he says, "*Harper's Weekly* for this week comes to us containing a picture of the Wigwam and one of Chicago, and more miserable abortions never appeared in a pictorial paper. They are a disgrace to the artist and paper both. The view of Chicago is a caricature upon our city, and we hope henceforth if we must be pictured, that it may be done by some other pictorial paper possessing artists of some degree of capability."

The formal opening of the Wigwam was set for the Saturday evening preceding the opening of the convention. "This evening," said the *Journal* of May 12th, "the Republican Wigwam, built by the Republicans of Chicago . . . will be dedicated to the cause of freedom with appropriate ceremonies, music, speaking, singing, and glorification generally will be the order of the night . . . The council fires will be lighted in the hut. Come up and gather round for an old fashioned talk. Come all and put a shoulder to the wheel, for tonight the ball begins to roll and the signal guns of the approaching contest between Freedom and Slavery will be fired. Let every man be at his post."

And we may believe that every man was at his post for in spite of the admission fee of twenty-five cents charged to defray the debt of about \$2000 on the building, "at an early hour the vast structure was crowded with an enthusiastic throng of people, a respectable portion being ladies. The stage, galleries and the body of the house," runs a perfervid newspaper account, "were completely packed with the thousands who had come up to this preliminary

meeting of the campaign, to dedicate a new rallying place during the coming and long wished for contest between freedom and slavery. The sight was a grand and inspiring one; the noble structure, a voluntary gift to freedom; the sea of faces beaming with delight and kindling with the patriotic ardor of the occasion; the intermingling draperies, flags, flowers and festoons; the busts of departed sages and heroes benignantly looking down upon a scene which they had dimly prophesied but never seen; the peeling music; all conspired to form a glorious omen of the future—a prophetic sign, large with golden promise of a glorious harvest of truth and right next fall . . .”

Among the speakers on this occasion was a Mr. Johns, a delegate-at-large from Iowa, “a plain, homespun western farmer, but sound to the core.” He had walked *150 miles* to get to a railroad that he might come to the convention. His “brief, practical speech, filled with happy hits, kept the crowd in a continual roar.” He was followed by Henry S. Lane of Indiana, the recently nominated Republican candidate for governor, and by Governor Morrill of Maine; and finally by that old anti-slavery war-horse, Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, who took the stand “amid the most deafening applause.”

The next day, being Sunday, two religious services were held in the Wigwam conducted by Presbyterian and Baptist pastors; while on Monday and Tuesday evenings large crowds again came to political rallies where their enthusiasm was stirred by music and oratorical pyrotechnics.

Such were some of the preparations for “a convention pregnant with momentous interest to this country;” and so the convention week opened upon a city rapidly filling with strangers and delegates from every part of the Union, and “resonant with the bustle and activity consequent thereupon.” Long before the convention opened the hotels

were "crowded with politicians, lobby men and delegates caucusing, comparing notes and arranging preliminaries." And yet, said the *Journal*, "these are but a handful to the immense crowds yet to come who will tax our municipal accommodations to the utmost. But when the hotels fail, then without doubt our citizens will throw open their doors and extend their hospitalities cordially. The latch strings are all out and we can take care of all creation."

And Chicago's forty-two hotels, with rates from \$1.50 to \$2.50 a day, were indeed taxed to the limit to take care of even a fraction of all creation. Even billiard tables were made to serve as beds. One observer going the rounds about midnight during the convention found no less than one hundred and thirty persons in one hotel *glad* to find a chance to repose on the tops of billiard tables. Registers were opened for those private citizens who were willing to entertain visitors. Newspapers contained many notices for meetings of former citizens of California, New York, Pennsylvania or the New England States, to organize as sub-committees on the reception and entertainment of delegates and visitors from their native States. These committees, as well as the political marching clubs of young men, known as the Wide-Awakes, made it their business to meet delegations upon their arrival at the railway stations and escort them to their headquarters. Thus, when the Pennsylvania delegation of six hundred arrived during the small hours of Tuesday morning, accompanied by bands from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, they marched in procession escorted by the Light Guard Band of Chicago and "the Sons of Pennsylvania" to the Briggs House where the majority of the delegation were quartered. There they were "received by their countrymen with open arms."

As early as Saturday evening, some of the most distinguished delegates began to arrive, for example, Horace

Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune* who came, not as a delegate from New York, for he was bitterly hostile to the Seward-Weed machine, but as a delegate by proxy from Oregon. From the moment of his arrival, he devoted his energies to preventing if possible the nomination of Seward, believing that Edward Bates of Missouri would make a stronger candidate for the party. The same day Governor Morgan of New York, chairman of the National Committee, arrived, and Thurlow Weed also, Seward's campaign manager, the first Republican boss of New York State and the ablest political tactician that had appeared in American politics up to that time. Governor Morgan made the Tremont House his headquarters, while Weed established himself at the Richmond House, much after the manner of Jethro Bass as depicted in Churchill's *Coniston*. Here Weed was later found by Carl Schurz, chairman of the Seward delegation from Wisconsin, surrounded not by political luminaries of the first magnitude, but by a crowd of satellites, some of whom did not strike Schurz as desirable companions of New York politicians—apparently men of the baser sort whom Weed had brought with him to aid in doing his work. "What that work consisted in, I could guess," says Schurz, "from the conversations I was permitted to hear, for they talked very freely about the great services they had rendered or were going to render. They had marched, they had treated members of other delegations with no end of champagne and cigars, to win them for Seward, if not as their first, then at least as their second, choice, to be voted for on the second or third ballot. They had hinted to this man and that man supposed to wield some influence, that if he could throw that influence for Seward, he might, in case of success, count upon proper 'recognition.' They had spent money freely and let everybody understand that there was a great lot more to spend. Among these men Thurlow

Weed moved as a great captain, with ceaseless activity and noiseless step, receiving their reports and giving new instructions in his peculiar whisper, now and then taking one into a corner of the room for secret talk, or disappearing with another through a side door for transactions still more secret.”<sup>2</sup>

It was not until Monday and Tuesday, however, that the crowds really began to pour in upon Chicago, making the railroad depots “beat like great hearts with their living tide; Republicans from mountains Green, Blue and White; Republicans from the woods of Maine, the green valleys of all New England and ‘the wild where rolls the Oregon;’ Republicans from the Golden Gate and the old plantation; Republicans from everywhere. What seems a brilliant festival, is but the rally for a battle; it is an army with banners.”

The receptions accorded some of the larger Eastern delegations upon their arrival furnished themes for much reportorial rhetoric. A special train over the Michigan Central brought the Massachusetts and other New England delegations. Long before its arrival Monday evening, we read that “Michigan Avenue, Lake Street and all the avenues leading to the depot were thronged with an eager crowd of all New Englanders and citizens, all expectant of the arrival of their friends and old neighbors. Michigan avenue was finely illuminated, and as the train neared 12th street, a brilliant rocket announced it to the crowd. Another rocket streamed from Jackson street; a cannon boomed across the Basin; the bands struck up, and hearty cheers from the thousands of New England throats welcomed the train now nearing the depot. And the Wide-Awakes, with gleaming torches, as well as the crowd, took up their line of march for the depot. The immense interior of this

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<sup>2</sup>Schurz. *Reminiscences II*, 176.

terminal (five hundred feet in length by one hundred and sixty-seven in width) was soon packed with a vast throng. The train came to a standstill, and then the crowd with clapping hands and huzzas welcomed their old friends with a genuine New England warmth and zeal. Gilmore's band from Boston, which was aboard, stepped out upon the platform and played an air in splendid style, which was received with hearty cheers, after which the delegates were escorted to their various hotels."

At the same time, the Michigan Southern train was arriving in another part of the city with the New York and other delegations. This train, so a newspaper announced the next day, "accomplished a feat in railroad annals that will long stand unsurpassed, if indeed it is safe and desirable" to repeat the performance. This great feat consisted in covering the distance between Buffalo and Chicago in fifteen hours and a half. "What," said this paper, "would the pioneers of less than a quarter of a century ago have thought of that?"

The character and behavior of the New York contingent of Seward "boosters" were subjects of more comment in the newspapers than was true of any other delegation. "The New Yorkers here," says one eyewitness, "are of a class unknown to the Western Republican politicians. They can drink more whiskey, swear as loud and long, sing as bad songs, and 'get up and howl' as ferociously as any crowd of Democrats you ever heard or heard of. They are opposed, as they say, to being 'too damned virtuous.' They hoot at the idea that Seward could not sweep all the northern states, and swear that he would have a party in every slave state in less than a year that would clean out the disunionists from shore to shore. . . . At night most of them who are not engaged in caucusing, are doing what ill-tutored youths call 'raising hell gen-



erally.' Wherever you find them, the New York politicians, of whatever party, are a peculiar party." The leader of these New York roustabouts, it may be interesting to add, was no less a distinguished personage than one Tom Hyer, "a noted bruiser" or prize fighter of that day.

But delegates, alternates and hired boosters constituted only a small part of the strangers drawn to Chicago from all parts of the country. Special rates granted by Eastern railroads of \$15 for the round trip from Buffalo, tickets good for fifteen days, duplicated after much newspaper prodding by similar concessions from the Western roads, helped to bring together a number variously estimated by the glowing newspaper imagination at from 75,000 to 125,000. In other words, Chicago's population may have exactly doubled in that eventful week. More than nine hundred newspaper men applied for seats on the platform as press correspondents, whereas space had been reserved for only sixty.

Straw votes, as we should call them today, were taken on many of the trains crowded with convention visitors, and the results published in the newspapers from day to day before the convention opened. One such a ballot on a Michigan Central train of twelve coaches gave Seward 210 votes to 30 for all other candidates; on a Chicago & Northwestern train, Seward had 127 and all others 44; on a Chicago & Rock Island train of ten coaches, Seward again led with 113 to 41 for all others. On these three trains no vote appears to have been cast for Lincoln; but on a Chicago and Milwaukee train, Seward had 368, Lincoln 93, and all others 46; while on a New Albany & Salem (Indiana) train, Lincoln had 51, Seward 43 and 131 were divided among other candidates. This is the only record of a straw vote which I have found in which Lincoln's vote exceeded that of Seward. And it may be added that

these straw votes so overwhelmingly favorable to Seward's nomination, were a fair indication of the personal preference of probably the great majority of delegates and alternates when this epoch-making convention assembled at noon on Wednesday, May 16, Seward's fifty-ninth birthday.

Long before the hour of opening on that day, the streets in the vicinity of the Wigwam were thronged by thousands of people who crowded around the doors and windows, congregated upon the bridge, sat on the curbstones, and in short, made use of every available inch of standing room. "Ladies, gentle and tender," we read, "whose loyal hands had wrought for days on the decorations waited long and patiently in the crowd to win a good seat where they might reap their well-earned meed."

At half past eleven the three twenty-foot doors on Market street were opened, slowly at first and only to ticket holders, and the tide began to flow past the doorkeepers who stood with "Roman firmness." When all the ticket holders were in, the last barrier was removed at the doors, and one grand rush filled and packed every part of the hall. What a contrast to the first Republican national convention only four years before! Then a hall seating two thousand had been sufficient for both delegates and spectators: now the Wigwam was jammed, and perhaps twenty thousand people were outside clamoring for admission. No convention had ever attracted such a crowd of onlookers.

The reservation of the gallery for ladies accompanied by gentlemen naturally created a great demand among the men for feminine *escorts*. School girls were found in the street and given a quarter each to see a gentleman safely in. One girl being asked to take a gentleman to the gallery and offered half a dollar for so doing, excused herself by saying that she had already taken two men in at each of the three doors and was afraid of arrest if she carried the enterprise

any further. An Irishwoman passing with a bundle of clothes under her arm was levied upon by an "irrepressible" and seeing him safely into the seats reserved for ladies and accompanying gentlemen, retired with her fee and bundle. Even an Indian squaw who was selling moccasins was pressed into such service. "This was more than the door-keepers could stand and after a spirited argument, it was decided that she was no lady. The young Republican protested indignantly against the policeman's decision, claiming equal rights for all womankind."

While the delegates, alternates, newspaper men and spectators are finding seats or standing room, we may rapidly single out some of the principal actors in the drama about to begin. As chairman of the New York delegation, sits William M. Evarts, orator and lawyer of national reputation, and later Secretary of State under President Hayes. Caleb B. Smith, shortly to become Lincoln's Secretary of the Interior, is a delegate-at-large from Indiana. John A. Andrew, soon to become the famous war governor of Massachusetts, is chairman of the Old Bay State delegation; while just behind him sits George S. Boutwell, later Secretary of the Treasury under President Grant. Gideon Welles, afterwards Lincoln's efficient Secretary of the Navy, leads the Connecticut delegation as they march to their seats. Carl Schurz, later on Senator from Missouri and Secretary of the Interior, now heads the Wisconsin delegation. Old Joshua Giddings is over there with the Ohio delegation, and so is Thomas Corwin, whose eloquent oration against the war with Mexico some of us may have declaimed in undergraduate oratorical contests. That curious-looking, spectacled old gentleman, with the hair of nondescript color and lambrequin variety of whiskers, sitting under the Oregon standard, is none other than Horace Greeley, the foremost newspaper editor of his generation. That individual of

mammoth proportions under the Illinois standard is Judge David Davis, Lincoln's campaign manager; and that delegate who comes limping to his seat with the Pennsylvanians is Thaddeus Stevens, later the evil genius of radical Republicanism during Reconstruction.

Unlike the Republican conventions of 1908 and 1912, in which senators, congressmen and national committeemen were conspicuous and at times offensively so, there were in the convention of 1860, only two senators (Simmons of Rhode Island and King of New York), four representatives, and five national committeemen. As to the general appearance of the assembled delegations, the *Chicago Times*, a Democratic newspaper, bore reluctant testimony that "the representatives personally are perhaps as fine a looking body of men as ever assembled in the Union. No one who should see them would ever suppose they entertained the extravagant and dangerous political sentiments that they pretend to believe in."

Contemplating the scene before him on the opening day, the editor of the *Journal* began an editorial with these winged words:—

".... The scene is such as a man beholds but once in a lifetime. Along a thousand lines of a continent's open palm, Wisdom and Patriotism have come pilgrims, and the men on two seaboard are waiting for a voice from Chicago. That voice will utter a name, and its syllables will flash along the lightning's spidery web from border to border; unnumbered tongues will speak it; unnumbered pens record it; hearts will cherish it; hands will uphold it. It will be a name to rally a host, to win a battle, to honor a principle, to bless a land. These men sitting in counsel to-day are doing no perishable work; no 'prentice business that journeymen will revise; they are making history; they are adding a chapter to the story of a struggle that has slavery on one side and liberty

on the other; they are taking care of a legacy; and they will do their work well. . . .”

But this rhapsody was probably interrupted at ten minutes past twelve, for at that moment Governor Morgan of New York, chairman of the national committee, stepped forward to call the convention to order and read the call for the Convention. This call was significantly addressed not only to “the Republican electors of the several States,” but to “the members of the People’s party of Pennsylvania and of the Opposition party of New Jersey.” These names were convenient *aliases* for the Republican party in those two States, and the presence of delegations from those States proved a decisive factor before the convention adjourned.

After the call had been read, David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, author of the famous Wilmot Proviso of 1846 which we wrestled with back in the grammar school, was chosen temporary chairman amid “vociferous cheering,” and made the customary “keynote speech,” after which the work of temporary organization proceeded. Temporary secretaries were named, and committees on permanent organization, on credentials, and on rules and order of business announced. About two o’clock the convention voted to adjourn until five o’clock; but not until an astonishing amount of time had been consumed in discussing an invitation from the Chicago Board of Trade to delegates and visitors to take a short excursion on Lake Michigan. The excursion was to leave the dock at Rush street bridge, near the Richmond House at five o’clock, the very hour proposed for the convention to reassemble. When this invitation was *first* announced, Judge Goodrich of Minnesota, casting his eye “about this vast tabernacle, reared by the taste and munificence of the ladies and gentlemen of Chicago, and tendered to the great Republican cause without money and without price,” said he “apprehended that every delegate in the con-

vention would respond aye to the invitation." And so they did. But when later five o'clock had been fixed upon as the hour for reconvening, there ensued a discussion filling three or four closely printed pages of the official proceedings respecting the demands of courtesy toward the Board of Trade on the one hand, and on the other hand, the duty of the convention to place business before pleasure. Finally, a motion to reconsider the acceptance of the invitation was carried and upon reconsideration the matter was referred to a small committee to adjust with the Board of Trade which had already taken steps necessary for the assembling of its lake fleet.

Although the interval between the first two sessions of the convention was of three hours duration and the audience at the close of the morning session had been requested to vacate the hall in order that the carpenters might put in some finishing strokes upon the Wigwam, "an immense crowd of people" waited during the entire intermission, preferring to be sure of a seat or standing room rather than take any chances.

At the five o'clock session, Hon. George Ashmun of Massachusetts, was chosen permanent chairman; and Preston King of New York and Carl Schurz of Wisconsin were named a committee to escort the chairman to the platform. Senator King is described as "short and round as a barrel and fat as butter," while Schurz was very tall and very slender. "When," says Schurz, "the Senator and I met in the aisle to walk together to Mr. Ashmun's seat and thus to perform a function intended to be somewhat solemn, and the Senator looked up at me and I looked down at him, a broad smile overspread his jocund face, to which I could not help responding. The suggestion of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza was too striking for the assembled multitudes to resist and a titter ran over the convention."

Mr. Ashmun was "speedily discovered to be an excellent presiding officer, a treasure to the convention." His clear, full-toned voice was one refreshing to hear amid the convention clamors. His speech upon assuming the chair was described as "very good for the occasion, and delivered with just warmth enough. He was animated and yet his emotion did not get the better of him." Following that, Mr. Judd of Illinois "on behalf of one of the working mechanic Republicans of Chicago" (Mr. C. G. Thomas), presented the chairman with a gavel, "beautifully wrought, finished and ornamented with ivory and silver; and made from a piece of oak taken from Commodore Perry's flag-ship, the *Lawrence*."

At this session also the permanent organization of the convention was perfected, and a committee on resolutions appointed to draft the platform. Mr. D. D. Pratt of Logansport, Indiana, was chosen reading clerk, and won "the admiration of everybody" before the convention was over. "His stentorian voice filled the vast hall," said the *Tribune*, "and every word that he uttered was heard to the farthest corner of the immense building, clear and loud above the din and uproar created by the myriad of excited people. He is endowed," continues this description, "with lungs of brass and clarion vocal powers, the one never tiring and the other superior to all competing sounds."

At an early hour Wednesday evening the convention adjourned until ten o'clock the next forenoon. Many delegates and visitors seem to have taken advantage of the invitation of the Board of Trade for a sail on the Lake that evening. "Four vessels were lashed together and accommodated the excursion very pleasantly. The Garden City Band furnished the music." Others attended the exhibition drill in the Wigwam given by the United States Zouave Cadets. Those who, like Mr. Tracy of California,

had come a long way and were tired from their trip and the excitement of the first day, doubtless retired early; but many others kept up the excitement nearly all night. The Pennsylvania delegation, to mention only one, "came out in procession, led off by their fine bands" with which they passed through the principal streets. At two o'clock in the morning a part of the Missouri delegation were singing songs in their parlor, and "there were still a crowd of fellows caucusing—and glasses were still clinking in the bar-rooms, and far down the street a band was making the night musical."

As the hour drew near for the convention to reconvene Thursday morning, the Seward men, all wearing badges, formed a big and picturesque procession in front of the Richmond House, and marched away in a cloud of dust to the Wigwam, preceded by a splendidly uniformed band which was playing with greatest enthusiasm, "Oh, Isn't He a Darling," one of the popular airs of the day. The same immense crowds as on the first day swarmed in and around the Wigwam long before the opening of the forenoon session. "The galleries especially presented a galaxy of brilliancy and beauty, being densely crowded with ladies. Gilmore's fine Boston band discoursed their glorious music for some minutes previous to the opening and were rewarded with the enthusiastic plaudits of the immense throng present."

The forenoon session of Thursday was devoid of any very exciting incidents. The only matters under consideration were the reports of committees on rules of order and business and the report of the committee on credentials. There was a lengthy debate upon the question of admitting delegates from the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and the District of Columbia and from the slave states of Maryland, Virginia, Texas and Kentucky. Ultimately the delegations



from these states were seated, and a recess taken until 3:15 p. m.

At the afternoon session of Thursday the incidents of chief importance arose in connection with the adoption of the party platform. The reading of the platform reported by the committee on resolutions was, according to the official record, "interrupted by tremendous bursts of applause, the most enthusiastic and long-continued" being given, it may surprise us to know, to clauses favoring a protective tariff and the enactment of a free homestead law. The last appealed especially to the middle West and the laboring classes in the Eastern cities, while the former received tumultuous applause from Pennsylvania, then as now the citadel of Protectionism. Indeed, in the campaign which ensued comparatively little was said in Pennsylvania on the slavery question by Republican speakers, but great emphasis was laid upon the tariff plank.

The committee which drafted the platform desired a campaign document free from radicalism and idealism; in other words, a platform that would appeal strongly to conservative and practical men. Consequently a few radical and idealistic passages appearing in the platform of 1856 were omitted in the draft reported to the convention, notably that well-known quotation from the Declaration of Independence, beginning, "We solemnly assert the self-evident truths that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," etc. This omission led to the only dramatic incident of the afternoon. That old, white-haired, battle-scarred veteran of the anti-slavery fight, Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, believing that these phrases expressed one of the most fundamental principles of the Republican party, seized the first opportunity to move in a brief but impassioned speech the amendment of the platform by the re-insertion of the omitted passage. Almost

immediately, the convention rather brusquely and overwhelmingly voted the amendment down. Feeling humiliated and wounded in his most cherished philosophy, Giddings rose and walked out of the Wigwam, while the convention proceeded to discuss other parts of the platform. George William Curtis, one of the youngest of the New York delegates and afterwards the most eloquent apostle of civil service reform, realizing the inexpediency of alienating the large number of voters who shared Giddings' radical and idealistic principles, soon sprang to his chair and renewed Giddings' amendment in slightly different form, supporting his motion in a short speech which even the formal record says was interrupted with "tremendous cheering" and followed by "terrific applause." "I have to ask this convention," said Curtis, "the second national convention the Republican party has ever held—I have to ask this convention whether they are prepared to go upon the record and before the country as voting down the words of the Declaration of Independence? I have, sir, in the amendment which I have introduced quoted simply and only from the Declaration of Independence. Bear in mind that in Philadelphia in 1856, the convention of this same great party was not afraid to announce those [principles] by which alone the Republican party lives and upon which alone the future of this country in the hands of the Republican party is passing. Now, sir, I ask gentlemen gravely to consider that in the amendment which I have proposed, I have done nothing that the soundest and safest man in all the land might not do; and I rise simply . . . to ask gentlemen to think well before, upon the free prairies of the West, in the summer of 1860, they dare to wince and quail before the men who in Philadelphia in 1776—in Philadelphia, in the archkeystone State, so amply, so nobly represented upon this platform today—before they dare to shrink from repeating

the words that these great men enunciated." His words electrified the convention, we are told, and carried such conviction, that the amendment was adopted. So the venerable Giddings was placated and returned to the convention.

Then came the adoption of the platform as a whole by a unanimous vote, followed by a demonstration thus described by the editor of the *Journal*.—

"Of all the manifestations of enthusiasm that we have ever witnessed anywhere or on any occasion, that in the Wigwam immediately succeeding the adoption of the . . . . platform by the convention yesterday afternoon was the wildest, the most spontaneous and the most exciting. The chairman announced the vote, 'carried unanimously.' In an instant, as if all hearts in the vast hall had been linked together by an electric cord, that immense concourse of people, delegates and spectators, numbering in all not less than fifteen thousand souls, sprang to their feet, and cheers upon cheers, deafening, tumultuous, and rapturous, went up from every throat. Men waved their hats, ladies their handkerchiefs, reporters their written pages and all screamed with very joy. This wild excitement was kept up for some ten or fifteen minutes. It was a scene that can never be forgotten by those present, a spectacle that was worth a man's lifetime to witness. It made one feel good all over. It was a manifestation of earnest feeling, a gushing out of the heart's fullness, a demonstration of the honest and ardent sincerity of those who love a great Principle for its own sake . . . ."

When this demonstration had subsided, some one moved that the convention proceed to ballot for a candidate for the presidency, and had that motion prevailed, there is little doubt that Seward would have been nominated that night; but fortunately at that moment the secretary<sup>n</sup> an-

nounced that the papers necessary for the purpose of keeping the tally, although prepared, were not at hand, but would arrive in a few minutes. Whereupon, "a Voice" was heard moving that "this convention adjourn until ten o'clock tomorrow morning." The motion was carried, and the morrow gave us Abraham Lincoln.

But that result was not foreseen by all, not even by the best informed delegates; for at 11:40 o'clock that night Horace Greeley, who had been bending every energy to compass Seward's defeat, deemed the fight hopeless and telegraphed the New York *Tribune*, "My conclusion, from all that I can gather tonight is that the opposition to Governor Seward can not concentrate on any candidate, and that he will be nominated." That night champagne flowed freely at the Seward headquarters in the Richmond House in celebration of the expected victory, and Seward bands went the rounds serenading the different delegations whose support was expected. To these revellers, the battle seemed all over but the shouting.

But soberer and sobering influences had been quietly at work against Seward ever since the delegates had begun to arrive in the city. Chief among these factors operating against Seward's nomination were Henry S. Lane, the Republican candidate for Governor of Indiana, and Andrew Gregg Curtin, the candidate of the People's party for Governor of Pennsylvania. In each of these states there existed a strong remnant of the old Native American or Know-Nothing party of the early fifties, which would have none of Seward because of his former hostility to that party. The Indiana delegation was now actively working for the nomination of Lincoln, while the Pennsylvania delegation was pledged to support Simon Cameron. In New Jersey the Opposition party, as it called itself, was also hostile to Seward for similar reasons, and was now

supporting William L. Dayton as the "favorite son" of that State. Illinois could be carried only by a candidate able to develop great strength against Stephen A. Douglas who was certain to be the candidate of the Northern wing of the Democratic party. Lincoln had in 1858 proved his superiority over Douglas as a vote-getter in Illinois in the senatorial campaign of that year. Accordingly the Illinois delegation had been instructed only a week before to vote for Lincoln's nomination. Murat Halstead thus described the situation in his despatches to the *Cincinnati Commercial*: "The Pennsylvanians declare if Seward were nominated they would be immediately ruined. They could do nothing. The majority against them would be counted by tens of thousands. New Jerseyites say the same thing. The Indianians are of the same opinion. They look broken-hearted at the suggestion that Seward has the inside track, and throw up their hands in despair. They say Lane will be beaten, the legislature pass utterly into the hands of the Democrats and the two Republican senators hoped for heard of no more. Illinois agonizes at the mention of Seward, and says he is the sting of political death. His nomination would kill off [Senator] Trumbull and give the legislature into the hands of the Democrats . . ."

The absolute necessity for the Republicans to carry at least three of these states at the November election in order to win the Presidency, and the certainty that Seward would prove fatally weak in those states, convinced many delegates that his nomination would be inexpedient. Other delegates were convinced that Seward was generally regarded as too radical on the slavery question; while others were moved by the fact that Seward's machine in New York had been recently involved in more or less shady franchise legislation in Albany for the benefit of certain street railway magnates in New York City who, it was believed,

were contributing generously to Seward's campaign fund. The problem before the anti-Seward forces, therefore, was to find a candidate upon whom the delegations from these four states could unite when the time came for balloting. All these considerations were driven home by Lane and Curtin and their co-workers as they went about from one delegation to another the day and night preceding the balloting. To such efforts and to such considerations is to be attributed Seward's defeat on the morrow, for in all respects in which Seward was weak, Lincoln, although comparatively unknown, was shown to be strong. His nomination was therefore peculiarly the triumph of availability, of party expediency over prominence and personal popularity.

Years afterwards the story of just how Lincoln's nomination was prearranged was thus related in the *Century* magazine<sup>3</sup> by Thomas H. Dudley, a delegate-at-large from the State of New Jersey. About noon on Thursday, a caucus of the delegations from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois was held at the Cameron headquarters in the Briggs House, presided over by Governor Reeder of Pennsylvania. After prolonged discussion it was found that no agreement could then be reached. But a committee of three from each state was appointed which met in the rooms of David Wilmot about six o'clock that evening and remained in session until eleven o'clock minutely canvassing the entire situation. About ten o'clock the white head of Horace Greeley appeared at the door and inquired if any agreement had been reached, and was told that nothing had been done. Soon after Greeley left<sup>4</sup>, the committee computed as accurately as possible the probable voting strength of the anti-Seward candidates before the con-

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<sup>3</sup>*Century*, XL, 477.

<sup>4</sup>It was after this that Greeley sent his telegram to the *Tribune*.

vention, and it was found that Lincoln was the strongest, that he could obtain more votes than either Cameron or Dayton. Thereupon, a member from New Jersey offered to urge upon the delegation from that state the wisdom of withdrawing Dayton and supporting Lincoln, provided the Pennsylvania members of the committee would agree to recommend to their state delegation the same action in the case of Cameron. With some reluctance this was finally agreed to, and the committee of twelve adjourned. About one o'clock Friday morning, the New Jersey delegation was brought together in a caucus. It was then decided to accept the proposal to support Lincoln after giving a complimentary vote to Dayton on the first ballot. The Pennsylvania delegation met in caucus about nine o'clock Friday morning, and arrived at the same decision with respect to Cameron only a short time before the re-assembling of the convention. Thus the final arrangements were perfected which insured Lincoln's nomination a few hours later.

The expectation amounting almost to a certainty, that the question which had been uppermost in the minds of visitors and delegates alike, ever since their arrival in Chicago, would be answered that day, drew an immense throng around the Wigwam Friday forenoon. When after two or three hours of waiting the doors were opened, thousands, keyed to the highest pitch of political excitement, poured into the building, filling every nook and cranny of available sitting or standing room.

After a few comparatively unimportant matters were disposed of, the chairman announced that nominations were in order. Immediately Mr. Evarts of New York obtained recognition. "I take the liberty," said he, "to name as a candidate to be nominated by this convention for the office of President of the United States, William H. Seward."

He was instantly followed by Mr. Judd of Illinois, whose nominating speech was equally brief: "I desire, on behalf of the delegation from Illinois, to put in nomination as a candidate for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois." In this simple fashion, with no long-winded or nerve-racking eulogies, two of the greatest names in the annals of the Republican party were placed in nomination: the day of "Plumed Knight" speeches was sixteen years in the future. Mr. Dudley of New Jersey presented the name of William L. Dayton, the "favorite son" of that state. Mr. Reeder, former governor of Kansas Territory, presented the name of Simon Cameron, the founder of the present Republican machine in Pennsylvania. Mr. Cartter of Ohio nominated Salmon P. Chase; F. P. Blair, Jr., of Missouri presented the name of Greeley's candidate, Edward Bates, afterwards the Attorney-General of Lincoln's cabinet; Mr. Corwin nominated Judge John McLean of the United States Supreme Court. A few equally brief seconding speeches followed.

Murat Halstead's description of how these nominations were received is too graphic to be condensed. "When the candidates were put in nomination, the only names that produced 'tremendous applause' were those of Seward and Lincoln. Everybody felt that the fight was between them, and yielded accordingly. Mr. Seward was first nominated and the applause was enthusiastic. The next nomination was that in behalf of Mr. Lincoln and the response was prodigious, rising and raging far beyond the Seward shriek. Presently Caleb B. Smith (of Indiana) seconded the nomination of Lincoln, and the response was absolutely terrific. It now became the Seward men to make another effort, and Blair of Michigan seconded his nomination, and



At once there rose so wild a yell,  
Within that dark and narrow dell,  
As all the fiends from Heaven that fell,  
Had pealed the banner cry of Hell.

The effect was startling. Hundreds of persons stopped their ears in pain. The shouting was absolutely frantic, shrill and wild. No Comanches or panthers ever struck a higher note or gave to a scream more infernal intensity. Looking from the stage over the vast amphitheatre, nothing was to be seen below but thousands of hats—a black, mighty swarm of hats—flying with the velocity of hornets over a mass of human heads, most of the mouths of which as appeared were open. Above, all around the galleries, hats and handkerchiefs were flying in the tempest together. The wonder of the thing was that the Seward outside pressure should, so far from New York, be so powerful.

“Now the Abe Lincoln men had to try it again, and Mr. Delano of Ohio, on behalf of a portion of the delegation of that State, seconded the nomination of Lincoln [as ‘a man who can split rails and maul Democrats’] and the uproar that followed was beyond description. Imagine all the hogs ever slaughtered in Cincinnati [then the Porkopolis of the West], giving their death squeals together, and a score of big steam whistles going together (steam at 160 pounds per inch), and you conceive something of the same nature. I thought the Seward yell could not be surpassed; but the Lincoln boys were clearly ahead, and feeling their victory, as there was a lull in the storm, they took deep breaths all round and gave a concentrated shriek that was positively awful, and accompanied it with stamping that made every plank and pillar in the building quiver . . . The New York, Michigan and Wisconsin delegations sat together and were in this tempest very quiet. Many of

their faces whitened as the Lincoln *yawp* swelled into a wild hosanna of victory . . . .”

Then came the roll-call of the States in geographical order beginning with New England, for the first ballot. The vote stood: whole number cast, 465; necessary to a choice, 233; Seward had  $173\frac{1}{2}$ , Lincoln 102, with Cameron of Pennsylvania third with  $50\frac{1}{2}$ . There being no choice, the convention forthwith proceeded to a second ballot. During the balloting it was announced that the name of General Cameron of Pennsylvania had been withdrawn. The result of the ballot was: Seward,  $184\frac{1}{2}$ , a gain of eleven votes, and Lincoln, 181, a gain of 79. At this announcement there was “tremendous applause.” Chase of Ohio now stood third with  $42\frac{1}{2}$  votes, a loss of six and a half. There again being no choice, the third ballot was begun amid the most intense excitement. As, however, the contest narrowed down the crowd became silent. Most of the delegates and many spectators had tally sheets in order to keep track of the balloting as it progressed. When the roll of the States had been called and every State had voted, the ballot stood Seward 180, a loss of four and a half, while Lincoln had  $231\frac{1}{2}$ , and lacked only *one and a half* of the number necessary to nominate. While these totals were being footed up, “a profound stillness suddenly fell upon the Wigwam; the men ceased to talk and the ladies to flutter their fans; one could distinctly hear the scratching of pencils and the ticking of telegraph instruments on the reporters’ tables.”

Before the result could be officially announced, and amid great confusion, Mr. Cartter of Ohio sprang to his chair and, when the confusion momentarily subsided, announced *the change of four Ohio votes to Mr. Lincoln*. At that moment “a man who had been on the roof and was engaged in communicating the result of the ballotings to the mighty mass

of outsiders, now demanded by gestures to know what had happened. One of the secretaries, with a tally sheet in his hands, shouted, 'Fire the salute! Abe Lincoln is nominated!'" Then, says the *Tribune* report, "A deafening roar of stentorian applause arose from the immense multitude such as had never been equalled on the American continent nor since the day that the walls of Jericho were blown down."

The change of Ohio's four votes was the signal for a rapid succession of "leaps into the band-wagon," in modern political parlance, on the part of delegations that had not voted for the successful candidate, all of which took place amid the wildest demonstrations. "A photograph of Abe Lincoln which had hung in one of the side rooms was brought in and held up before the screaming masses," who thereupon seized the standards on which the names of the States were printed, tore them from their moorings, and waved them aloft in delirious joy.

Finally, partial quiet was restored, and the vote was officially announced by the Secretary: whole number of votes cast, 466; necessary to a choice, 234; for Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, 364 votes. The chairman then declared "Abraham Lincoln of Illinois is selected as your candidate for President of the United States." "Thunders of applause," reads the parenthetical and laconic note in the official record. But, as John A. Andrew described the scene a few days later in a speech in Boston: "There arose a peal of human voices, a grand chorus of exultation, the like of which has not been heard in earth since the morning stars first sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy."

As the cheering *inside* the Wigwam momentarily died down, "we could hear," says Halstead, "the cheering outside, where the news of the nomination had just been

announced. And the roar, like the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep that was heard gave a new impulse to the enthusiasm inside. Then the thunders of the salute arose above the din, and the shouting was repeated with such tremendous fury that some discharges of the cannon were absolutely not heard by those on the stage. Puffs of smoke, drifting by the open doors and the smell of gunpowder told what was going on."

Anyone who has attended an exciting national convention will find it easy to believe the editor of the *Tribune* when he said, "It is absolutely impossible to describe, as it is equally impossible for one who was not present to imagine, the scene in the Wigwam when Mr. Lincoln was nominated. Without attempting, therefore," he continues, "to convey an idea of the delirious cheer, the Babel of joy and excitement, we may mention that stout men wept like children, that two candidates for the gubernatorial chairs of their respective States [probably Curtin and Lane], who looked to the nomination of Honest Old Abe to carry the Republican cause at home through the storm, sank down in excess of joy. The tumultuous emotions of men all over the platform who had not closed their eyes during the last forty-eight hours, trembling between hope and fear, laboring for what they deemed the best interest of the noblest cause under the heaven, acted with electrical effect on the immense auditory. Men of stern countenances and strong nerves, upon rising to speak, were almost disabled by their agitations. Mr. Browning of Illinois will pardon us for mentioning his name in this connection. But the scene is not to be pictured. It is ever memorable to those who witnessed it, and no more can be said."

Of course, *all* the delegates did not join in these wild outbursts, and I may add that the weeping done was not all caused by excess of joy. The Seward men from New

York and some other States, bitterly disappointed, sat quietly in their seats. With the ladies also Seward was the almost universal favorite, and we read in the *Journal* that "when the announcement was made that their favorite was not nominated, many of the dear creatures wept like children." Such "strong and convincing evidence of woman's patriotism and woman's ardent love of principle" almost persuaded the editor of that paper, himself an ardent Seward man, to be in favor of woman's rights in the widest sense of the term, and led him to exclaim editorially, "with all heart and sympathy in their disappointment, fully and feelingly, Heaven bless the ladies."

The nomination of Lincoln occurred not far from the noon hour. After the excitement had somewhat cooled or exhausted itself, business was resumed by the convention, and several speeches endorsing the nomination were made. Then about half past one the convention adjourned to five o'clock, at which time it reconvened and nominated Hannibal Hamlin of Maine for Vice-President upon the second ballot. Shortly thereafter, "with cheers for the Ticket, the Platform and the Ladies of Chicago," the convention adjourned, as one delegate with true prophetic instinct moved, "to meet at the White House on the Fourth of March next."

The tumultuous demonstration in the Wigwam after Lincoln's nomination was only the prelude to the celebration in the city that evening after the convention had adjourned. A grand rally of Republicans was held in the Wigwam which again was crowded to its utmost capacity, while about three thousand who were unable to gain admission, assembled outside and were addressed by Richard Yates, soon to become the famous war-governor of Illinois. "Inside, the enthusiasm was [once more] beyond description." Joshua R. Giddings spoke, followed by Z. K.

Pangborn, editor of the ancient Whig paper, the *Boston Atlas*, "whose jokes kept the house in roars of laughter and applause throughout his address . . . Also despatches were read from New York, Philadelphia and other cities stating that ratification meetings were assembling, guns firing, processions upon parade, etc., throughout the whole country."

Outside the Wigwam Chicago was swept by what Boss Barnes of New York would probably call "the gusty passions of the mob." One hundred guns were fired from the top of the Tremont House, and "their echoes caught up and answered from other parts of the city almost as soon as their flashes were seen across the night sky. Many buildings were illuminated, notably the large warehouse of A. Huntington, Wadsworth and Parks, on Lake street, with variegated lights in every window, while a banner was hung across the street upon which was painted, 'For President Abraham Lincoln.'"

The *Press and Tribune* building likewise was illuminated from "turret to foundation," by the brilliant glare of a thousand lights which blazed from windows and doors with most attractive and beautiful effect. On each side of the counting-room door stood a rail—one of the three thousand split by "Honest Old Abe" on the Sangamon River bottoms.

On the inside were two more, brilliantly hung with tapers, whose numberless individual lights glistened like so many stars in contrast with the dark walnut color of the wood. On the front of the office and over the main door, between the second and third stories, was suspended an immense transparency with this inscription upon it: "For President, Honest Old Abe, For Vice-President, Hannibal Hamlin."

Bonfires glared red upon the heavens from the streets and rockets "clove through the air like fiery telegrams to the stars." The Wide-Awakes were out with gleaming

torches and glistening capes and caps; crowds collected at the several hotels, shouldered fence rails, if they could be had, and in default thereof, pressed into service brooms, cord-wood, fish poles, and even rakes, and marched through the streets to the music of a score of bands. At dark several of the triumphal processions united and paraded through Clark Street, stopping before the *Tribune* building to rend the air "with soul-inspiring cheers and exclamations of victory which awakened a loud response from the honest hearts of the one hundred employees of this establishment." Verily, "Babel had come again," exclaims one contemporary, and "the Democratic Jericho shook at the shouts and blowing of trumpets and holding of torches in the left hands of Republican Gideons."

The Pennsylvanians in particular knew no bounds to the expression of their feelings. Immediately after the convention adjourned, they rallied several hundred strong at the Briggs House, where their headquarters presented "a scene of indescribable joy and excitement." They were eloquently addressed by their standard bearer, Andrew G. Curtin. They all asserted that Lincoln's nomination would gain them the State by at least 25,000 majority. The clouds which had darkened their political horizon were swept away and they saw the road open to an overwhelming triumph. Their feelings excited by "the certainty of such a glorious victory carried them almost beyond bounds in the expression of their wild anticipations." They were "crazy with delight," and declared that they were going home to put rail-pens in every school district in the State. They even telegraphed, it was said, to Decatur, for *the whole fence* that Old Abe had put up in 1830.

It is not known how many rails the Pennsylvanians secured, but probably not the whole number requisitioned, for an enormous demand for these original Lincoln rails

sprang up forthwith. They were bought up and forwarded by express to all parts of the country. Major Eggleston, President of the Cincinnati Board of Trade, was reported to have paid \$20 for a pair of them to send home for a glorious ratification. "The lucky owner of the timber," comments one contemporary, "has turned his possession to account rather more sharply than was fitting the occasion, but nothing can frustrate the desire for 'those rails.'"

Here my story ends, for with the departure early Saturday morning for Springfield of the committee appointed to notify Mr. Lincoln of his nomination; with the setting out of hundreds of convention visitors upon special excursions to Davenport, Iowa, and other much advertised points in the middle West; with the return to their homes of the thousands who had come to Chicago from the East and the West, the story of the Republican national convention of 1860 merges into the story of the great presidential campaign which followed and which was the prologue to the Civil War.









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